

# THE AMERICAN ATHENÆUM;

OR,  
REPOSITORY OF THE ARTS, SCIENCES, AND BELLES LETTRES.

AS THE COMPASS IS TO THE MARINER, SO IS POLITE LITERATURE TO THE FASHIONABLE WORLD.

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## AMERICAN LITERATURE.

### ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

It has been justly observed, that "too servile a submission to the books and opinions of the ancients, has spoiled many an ingenious man, and plagued the world with abundance of extravagant and absurd notions." Truth alone, (adds a writer of no little celebrity,) independent of theories and dogmas, is the foundation of correct opinions. Ninety men out of every hundred, have no opinions of their own; they borrow those of other men, and use them blindfold.

It was this "too servile a submission to the books and opinions of the ancients," that formerly induced some teachers of English grammar to perplex their pupils with six cases of declension for English nouns—not varied in their terminations, but merely distinguished by prepositions, which, in reality, belong to the preceding verb. Under the influence of this same "servile submission," too, our children are still taught to scan English verse by Greek and Latin rules, although their teachers are compelled to admit that the feet of English verse are never determined by quantity, but always by accent. Still they insist on retaining all the terms used by the ancients, notwithstanding such terms are rendered totally useless and inapplicable, by the very nature and genius of our language. Hence we are continually annoyed with such formidable words as *amphibrac*, *tribrach*, *anapest*, *pyrrhic*, *trochee*, *iambus*, *spondee*, *dactyl*, &c. From which a pupil would naturally infer that our poetry will admit of as many different kinds of feet, as that of the Greeks and Romans; whereas, the real truth is, that it will only admit (in regular succession) of two out of the whole number—namely, the *iambus*, and the *anapest*; for a line of *dactyls* becomes *anapestic* the moment we prefix two short or unaccented syllables.

Thus, until a very recent period, has PROSODY, like every other branch of English grammar, been shrouded and enveloped by the antiquated cobwebs of monastic lore—locked up in the dusty recesses of mystery and obscurity. But such pedantry is at length happily yielding to a plainness and simplicity more congenial to the tastes and habits of our republican citizens. English grammar is beginning to be understood and comprehended. It has been, in a good measure, divested of its gothic cowl and hood, and will soon stand displayed in all its native beauty and simplicity.

Among the American writers who have diligently laboured to bring about this desirable result, ALBERT PICKET, Esq. of

this city, holds a respectable rank. This gentleman is well known to most of our readers as author of the "American School Class-Books," &c. which are a series of elementary works, ascending in a regular, natural scale, from the Primer to the Expositor, and exactly adapted to the gradual and successive opening and enlargement of the juvenile mind. As an important link in the chain, he has recently published a new and improved edition of his "*Analytical School Grammar of the English language, comprising its principles and rules; adapted to the business of instruction in primary schools.*"

Although, in the work before us, the author has so far succeeded in simplifying and illustrating this important art, (or rather science,) that children of a moderate capacity can now easily comprehend what has heretofore appeared to them as unintelligible jargon, yet he has not made that thorough reformation which is now universally admitted to be desirable and practicable. We want an entire new system; Mr. Picket has greatly improved the old one; but, in the language of a Boston critic, "we regard this system as radically and almost totally false; and the study of the common books which teach it, as one of the most useless and stupid exercises ever imposed upon the growing mind."

"We do not mean to deny that the study of Grammar is attended with important advantages; but we believe that few of these advantages result from the system itself. They appear to be almost wholly incidental."\* So says the writer above alluded to, and so say we. The mind is exercised in determining the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences; and, by this means, acquires the habit of attending carefully and critically to the sense of what is heard and read. This is nearly all the advantage that can be derived from studying the common treatises on Grammar, and it is obvious that this does not depend on the correctness of the system. Some of the rules of orthography are useful, but these belong to a child's second Spelling-book. A few definitions of words are given more accurately than in our dictionaries; these, with the examples of incorrect modes of expression, and some of the rules for punctuation, are useful. It is commonly supposed that parsing is of great consequence, from its disclosing the relations which exist between several words in a sentence; but this will appear of much less account, when it is observed how very few of these relations are accurately defined. It cannot add much to the pupil's knowledge to tell him a *preposition* shows the relation between two words, while the nature of that relation is not explained;

or that a *conjunction* connects two words, while the connexion is undefined.

If a knowledge of the common system of parsing the English language be so important as is generally imagined, how came it to pass that so few good writers, of any age, have been at all dependant upon it? It is scarcely a century since parsing was unknown. Our aged fathers all tell us that it was taught little or none when they went to school. Even the most literary men among us—those who are distinguished for good writing and speaking, have rarely much acquaintance with this notable art. Had we a sentence hard to resolve, according to the principles and rules of Murray, we surely should not consult a president or professor of a college, except he were very young; nor a learned clergyman, nor an eminent lawyer or judge. Nay, if both houses of congress would make your question the order of the day, in committee of the whole, it is doubtful whether they could afford any aid; and many a one of them, whose eloquence is celebrated throughout the country, might, like Fontinelle, thank his stars that he has not yet learned what grammarians call a *preposition*. There is very little exaggeration in this. It is actually true, that very few of our eminent scholars of fifty or sixty years of age, can parse an ordinary paragraph according to common grammatical rules; and many of them never learned to do it.

It may be said that most of the learned, who did not make English grammar a separate study, yet acquired much knowledge of it from studying the Latin and Greek. There is some truth in this; but much less than is commonly imagined. The study of these languages affords great assistance in determining the exact meaning of the words in our own; not only of those which are derived from the Latin and Greek, but of all that are brought into use during the study. The constant use of the dictionary, for the purpose of determining what English word will express precisely the meaning of the Latin or Greek word, gives the mind a habit of selecting terms for expressing its meaning with facility and accuracy, and greatly enlarges its stock from which the selection is to be made. Add to this, that when the etymology of an English word is discovered, its exact meaning is generally better understood, and less liable to be forgotten.

These are great and important aids towards an extensive and correct knowledge of our language; and we think that they constitute the principal advantages which are derived from studying the dead languages. The grammatical structure of these is so different from that of our own,

\* See the U. S. Literary Gazette, for March 15.

that very little advantage can be derived from comparing them.

In these prefatory remarks, we shall not be understood as casting any censure upon Mr. Picket. He has doubtless a more favourable opinion of the common system of English grammar than we have expressed, or he would not have made it the groundwork of his book. But our objections to the general system cannot be applied to this, more than to other grammars; and the author has made some very important improvements, that give to his work a real value, which we can concede to no other within the reach of the public. Our business, therefore, with him, is to give him credit for all the good he has done, and thereby encourage him, and others, to make further advances in the work of reformation.

The first of these improvements which we shall mention, consists in the definitions which are given to the technical language of this science. These definitions are given in the form of explanations and remarks after the several sections; and they are much more numerous, clear, and comprehensive, than are to be found in the works in common use. Many of them are, however, partial, obscure, or erroneous, owing to the general vagueness and falsity of the system which they are designed to illustrate. But enough is well done to encourage the pupil greatly in the important habit of inquiring carefully and critically into the meaning of every thing that belongs to his lesson. This habit is so essential, that the value of every school-book must be considered as depending in the degree in which it is calculated to promote it. Picket's Grammar will encourage inquiry, and satisfy it, far better than any other that we have seen.

But the part of this book which we most highly esteem, consists of nine pages, in which the common prefixes and affixes of English words are defined. Whatever will aid the pupil in learning the exact meaning of terms, is of real value to him. We have already remarked that, to ascertain the etymology of a word, generally aids the mind in fixing its true signification. This idea is ridiculed by many, but it is not the less correct. No one pretends that the original word or words, of which a modern one may be found to be composed, furnish precisely the meaning now given to it; but to ascertain the radical meaning, and then observe the modifications in form and meaning which it has undergone in passing to its present state, exercises the mind sufficiently to make a lasting impression.

We have said that Mr. Picket has done well to define prefixes and affixes. We shall give an example relating to affixes, commencing on page 120.

*En* is a verbal termination expressing force, or energy; as, from the noun *height*, comes the verb *heighten*; from the adjective *dark*, comes the verb to *darken*; from the adjectives *less*, *hard*, *deaf*, comes the verb to *lessen*, to *harden*, to *deafen*.

*Ate*, signifies to *make*, or *act*; as, *alienate*, to make alien; *personate*, to act the person; *assas-*

*sinate*, to act the assassin; *criminate*, to charge with crime; *fabricate*, to make a fabrication.

Verbs ending in *ate*, draw after them a family of termination in *ant*, *or*, *ory*, *acy*, *ation*, and *ive*; as, from *operate*, come *operant*, *operator*, *operative*, and *operation*; from *derogate*, comes *derogatory*; from *expiate*, comes *expiatory*.

In examining the rules of *syntax* we noticed a few which are better than the corresponding rules in other grammars. Mr. Picket has generally selected the best part of other grammars; and, where he has deviated from them, he has made some improvement. He has set a very important example, in endeavouring to make this science intelligible to the pupil, in every stage of his progress; and most of his definitions of prefixes and affixes are very valuable additions to the common stock of grammatical knowledge.

Before closing this article, we wish to express the opinion, that nearly all artificial rules for writing and speaking would be rendered unnecessary by a work which would supply the deficiencies of our dictionaries. We need little instruction as to the right manner of using words which we perfectly understand. If any one is competent to give the etymology of English prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs, and to define the radical ideas which they now express, we believe he can do a more important service to philological science than any man has yet done. A work of this character, faithfully executed, would render the greater part of every grammar unnecessary. It should contain illustrations of the meaning of those words by numerous examples; and also point out the common errors which are committed, from ignorance of their true meaning. If Noah Webster, or any one else, can do this, we think he would be well rewarded for his labour. We mention Mr. Webster, because we have no evidence that any other gentleman in this country is so competent to the task; and, also, because the brief account of the work which he is now engaged in publishing, contained in the newspapers, permits us to hope that he has attempted something of this kind.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

##### SPRING.

Welcome to thee, thou lovely Spring!  
Earth's annual youth, so soon to fleet,  
Who in thy blooming train dost bring  
Fresh verdure, scenes renewed and sweet!  
*Italian of Guarini.*

To every one the return of spring brings new health and energy; and to almost all, new visions of hope, new day-dreams, which, if they are only destined to blight and disappointment, are not the less bright, airy, and cheering. Even the mourner may be induced, by the universal joyance, to forget his griefs awhile, and perhaps to look forward to happiness yet to come. The young will not fail to hail it with gladness, as the herald of pleasures more sprightly, and more congenial to their buoyant spirits: for the dearest joys of winter, though sweet, are melancholy;

the dreariness and desolation around tinge our thoughts and enjoyments with a degree of their own hue. If they who are declining in the vale of years feel that spring gives no more, to them, bounding bosoms and youthful glee, still it must awaken emotions of other days, grateful to their hearts, though withering with age, and that dark experience which a long acquaintance with the cold world entails on man.

But the Christian—he who endeavours to regulate his actions and his feelings by the unerring rule of right; he who ascribes to his great Author 'every good and perfect gift;' he whose soul ascends in gratitude for each blessing of his life—how will he adore the Being who created and ordained

"All seasons and their change!"

And with what rapture will he exclaim, with Thomson,

"The rolling year  
Is full of thee: Forth in the pleasing Spring,  
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love!  
Wide flush the fields; the soft'ning air is balm;  
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;  
And ev'ry sense, and ev'ry heart is joy."

QUIDAM.

#### For the American Athenæum.

Did ye mark the young rose  
On its lovely green stem,  
Just opening its lips to the dew?  
And the newly-fledged birds,  
Did ye look upon them,  
Just fluttering their wings ere they flew?  
Did ye mark the young light  
Dawning dim in the east,  
And the clouds cold and silent above—  
And the loud ringing bell,  
And the gay nuptial feast,  
And the joy of the bride and her love?  
Oh! the rose has been swept  
By the tempest's rude blast,  
And its leaves are all scattered and dead—  
And the light that dawn'd dim  
In the east, has now past,  
And its last ray in twilight has fled.  
And the young birds are gone—  
By the fowler they fell,  
As they sang on the sweet blossom'd spray;  
And the bell that was chim'd  
Is now knolling a knell,  
And the lover and bride—where are they?

#### COMPARISONS.

MAN is the rugged, lofty pine,  
That frowns on many a wave-beat shore:  
WOMAN the slender, graceful vine,  
Whose curling tendrils round it twine,  
And decks its rough bark sweetly o'er.  
Man is the rock, whose towering crest  
Nods o'er the mountain's barren sides:  
Woman's the soft and mossy vest,  
That loves to clasp its sterile breast,  
And wreath its brow in verdant pride.  
Man is the cloud of coming storm,  
Dark as the raven's murky plume:  
Save where the sunbeam, light and warm,  
Of woman's soul, and woman's form,  
Gleams lightly on the gathering gloom!  
Yes, lovely sex! to you 'tis given  
To wile our hearts with angel's sway,  
Blend with each woe a blissful leaven,  
Change earth into an embryo heaven,  
And sweetly smile our cares away.

SORROW is like the deaf adder, "that hears not the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely."



## GERMANY.

From the London Quarterly Review.

"WEIMAR, the capital of the Grand Duchy of that name, is the Athens of Germany. Encouraged by the Grand Duke, the most popular of sovereigns, Wieland, Schiller, Goethe, and Herder, resorted to his court, (the first, indeed, had the charge of his education,) and by their united genius, have spread a lustre over this little territory, not exceeding two hundred thousand souls in its population, which nothing but its literature could have imparted to it. Of these intellectual potentates, Goethe alone survives; now, through years and infirmities, withdrawn from a world with which he, heretofore, delighted to mix. Yet, not long ago, when a concert was given at Court, in honour of a birth day, the aged poet found his way thither, late in the evening, and on his entrance the music ceased, court and princes were forsaken, and the Grand Duke himself advanced to lead up his gray-headed friend.

Amongst the ladies of Weimar, as also of Saxony, there is a simplicity, which is quite delightful; knitting and needle-work know no interruption at home or abroad, and a female going to a route might forget her fan, but assuredly, remember her work-bag. At Dresden, even the theatre is not protected from the needle and knitting pin, and our author has seen a lady gravely lay down her work, wipe away the tears which the sorrows of Thekla had brought into her eyes, and immediately proceed with her stocking foot. It was, however, to be expected, that in a town which prides itself upon its learning, the softer sex would not always be free from pedantry, and, accordingly a few clubs of Blues have been formed to drink tea, and "talk about Shakspeare, taste, and musical glasses."

The popularity of the reigning family was insured by its humane and generous efforts to relieve the wretchedness entailed on the country by the war which closed with the battle of Leipzig; every source of courtly expense was cut off, for the purpose of administering to the wants of the houseless and fatherless peasantry, whose old village stories, of "witches on the Hartz, and legends of Number-Nip from the mountains of Silesia," had given place to tales of undivided misfortunes, of desolation, and of blood; and, however it may be credited, this sympathy has bound the people to the rulers far more closely than the representative government, which the Grand Duke has since bestowed on them, and upon which they are unenlightened enough to set a ludicrously little value.

"When the first election took place under the new Constitution, considerable difficulty was experienced in bringing up the electors, particularly the peasantry, to vote. In defiance of the disquisitions of the liberal professors of Jenna, they could not see the use of all this machinery. Do we not pay the Grand Duke for governing us, they said, and attending to the public

business? Why then give us all this trouble besides?"

Nay, after the experience of a representative body has been tried during seven years, many still assert that matters went on quite as well, and more cheaply, without them. Neither could the Grand Duke, with all his influence, persuade the members to debate with open doors, so fearful were some of the rustic senators of public ridicule: nor would they permit an abstract of their journals to be printed, except on condition that the name of the speakers should not appear. Half a guinea a day is the allowance at Weimar to each member during the session; and the representative of a country may be seen trudging to the house with a crust in his pocket, and returning home with his wages in his fob. Out of doors few persons care one farthing what the one and thirty statesmen are doing within; and except that an oracular word may now and then escape from a senator at a table d'hôte, or that a couple of old gentlemen may gossip over a state question as they lounge through the park, it is in vain to seek for symptoms that the great council of the nation is assembled at Weimar. An opera, romance, or a sledge party, is a subject of tenfold more interest; and politics are as yet the last thing thought about. Doubtless a taste for them will be created by degrees, and it is best that it should; when it come to the birth of an adult, it is too apt to start forth like Minerva from her father's head, in arms.

## RATIONAL LOVE.

WE all know the power of beauty, and to render it permanent, and make human life more happy and agreeable, it must have the beauties of the mind annexed. For, as Dr. Blair very justly observes, "feeble are the attractions of the fairest form, if nothing *within* corresponds to the pleasing appearance *without*. Love and marriage are two words much spoken of, but seldom found united. To be happy in the choice of the fair one we admire, is to cultivate that regard we experience for her, into lasting esteem. The connubial state was certainly designed to heighten the joys, and to alleviate the miseries of mortality. To cherish and admire her, who came into your arms, the object of joy and pleasure; and to comfort the same dear object of your affection when the clouds of adversity surround her. Happy within yourself, and happy in your connections, you ought to look up to the Author of all good gifts, and give him praise in the liveliest hour of social enjoyment." What avail all the pleasures of this sublunary state, if, when we shift the flattering scene, the man is unhappy, where happiness should begin, *at home*? An uninterrupted interchange of mutual endearments, among those of the family, imparts more solid satisfaction, than outward show with inward uneasiness. Love is a tender and delicate plant; it must be guarded from all incumbent blasts, or it will

droop its head and die. To enliven our hours, to pass our life agreeably, let us enrich our mental soil, for this, joined with love, will for ever adorn this happy state. A young lady, being asked her opinion of love, said, "If youth and beauty are the objects of your regard, *love*, founded on youth and beauty, cannot possibly endure longer than these last. Love should be sincere and generous, as Heaven first inspired it, and courtship void of mean dissimulation. But love, at this time of day, is raising the imagination to expectations above nature, and laying the sure foundation of disappointments on both sides, when Hymen shifts the scene." Love, then, according to this amiable young lady's opinion, is a *passion founded on esteem*. A sincere regard for the object of our affections, joined with a love the most pure, rational, and dignified.

For the American Athenæum.

## THE GRAND CANAL.

WHILE millions awaken to Freedom the chorus,  
In wreathing for valour the blood-sprinkled bay,  
The new brilliant era which opens before us,  
Demands the rich tribute of gratitude's lay—  
For ours is a boast unexampled in story,  
Unequalled in splendour, unrivalled in grace,  
A conquest that gains us a permanent glory,  
The triumph of science o'er matter and space—  
For realms that were dreary, are now smiling  
cheery,  
Since Hudson and Erie like sisters embrace.

From heroes, whose wisdom and chivalrous bearing  
Secured us the rights which no power can repeal,  
Have spirits descended as brilliantly daring,  
To fix on the charter eternity's seal.  
Behold them consummate the giant conception,  
Unwearied in honour's beneficent race,  
While nature submits to the daring surreption,  
And envy and ignorance shrink in disgrace—  
For realms that were dreary, are now smiling  
cheery,  
Since Hudson and Erie like sisters embrace.

The nymphs of our rivers, our lakes, and our fountains,  
Are now by the monarch of ocean caressed;  
While spurning the barriers of forests and mountains,  
Bold commerce enriches the wilds of the west.  
Then hail to the sages, whose wisdom and labours  
Conceived and perfected the brilliant design,  
Converting the most remote strangers to neighbours,  
By weaving a ligament nought can disjoin—  
For regions once dreary, are now smiling cheery,  
Since Hudson and Erie their waters combine.

And long thus devoted to festival pleasure,  
This day shall be sacred to genius and worth—  
For millions unborn shall rejoice at a measure  
Which renders our country the pride of the earth;  
No sectional feelings now mar our communion,  
Affection and interest are reckless of space,  
The national good is the bond of our union,  
Which ages shall brighten, but never deface.

GILES.

WHEREFORE is it that, together with all those delightful sensations to which the sight of a long absent friend gives birth, there is a mixture of something painful? The cause can only be resolved into that appointment, that all human delights shall be qualified and mingled with their contraries.

## ORIGINAL TALES.

## THE DISCOVERY; OR, CHARACTERISTICS.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

TOWARDS the close of the eighteenth century, and shortly after the third George was constrained to invert the sceptre which had been swayed over his colonies of North America with a despotic hand; and while yet the wounds of the colonists, inflicted in their struggle for independence, festered in the minds of exasperated thousands, the family of Edward Marvin, which was descended from the house of Stirling, (whether directly, or otherwise, we cannot say,) occupied a retreat in the emancipated State of New-Jersey. Edward had a sister, Sophia; both were in adverse circumstances, from an unfortunate event in the mercantile concerns of their parent, who died from intensity of feeling on being apprized of his losses. Edward and Sophia, however, became possessed of this estate, by virtue of an engagement on the part of a maternal uncle. They were to be equal sharers of his bounty, and the survivor, upon certain conditions, was to inherit the whole. About two years after this verbal contract had been entered into, the uncle died, when it was ascertained by his testament, that he had freely granted not only the rich estate already mentioned, but had added eighteen thousand pounds sterling to his landed bequest. At the death of this liberal donor, Edward was about twenty-eight years of age, and his sister nineteen. The hand of Sophia, soon after her uncle's decease, was solicited by a naval officer of high rank, to whom she speedily became allied, and who, shortly after, fell a victim to the pestilence that prevailed in the Mediterranean in the year 1769. The melancholy tidings of her husband's fate at once paralyzed all Sophia's faculties, and she gradually became a prey to disease, which bore her eventually to the tomb. Edward, shortly after the death of his sister, repaired to America, and took possession of the inheritance which had been so liberally bequeathed to him. In process of time he became acquainted with the daughter of a wealthy merchant in New-York, who accepted his proposal of matrimony; and from this connexion sprang the hero of our story. They were the parents of a daughter, also, but death snatched her from their embrace in early childhood, and William remained their only surviving offspring.

Under the immediate eye of parents who were tenderly affectionate, young Marvin was nurtured to manhood, where the following story first discovers him.

It is deemed totally unnecessary to say any thing of William prior to his assuming the rein of self-government, which took place immediately on arriving at his twenty-first year. Justice, however, prompts the remark, that during his minority his conduct was always fraught with a strict adherence to parental requirement.

## CHAPTER II.

"Your chaplets hither bring, ye fabled gods,  
"A free-will offering at the shrine of peace,  
"And mute attention lend."

DELIGHTFULLY rose the splendid luminary of day above the eastern hills, gladdening, by his soul-reviving beams, the regions far west, on the morning which told William that twenty-one fleet years, having witnessed his existence, had rolled by, into the ocean of eternity.

With emotions of ecstasy hitherto unknown to our hero, he sprang from his couch, asserting his claims to all the privileges of manhood, and after briefly and efficiently consulting the toilet, and uttering a faint "good morning" to his cousin Edward, who had been poring over the antique Rollin since the dawn of day, introduced himself to his doting parents as a scion from their immediate stock, that

had arrived at the age of maturity. He was welcomed, with the most lively expressions of congratulation, to the fond embraces of parental affection, by the protectors of his childhood, who were anxiously waiting his entrance; and the family being assembled, all sat down to enjoy the morning repast, which had been rendered far more delicate than upon any ordinary occasion.

Mr. Marvin, the father of William, having seated himself at the head of the board, a rap with the handle of his knife produced that attention so necessary to good family regulation, and he implored a blessing on the aliment of which they were about to partake, beseeching, with unusual fervency, the favour of heaven, especially toward him who had so recently burst the bonds of childhood.

Edward and Julia Munford were visitors at Monkton House, the residence of Mr. Marvin, and were relatives of the family. Edward was on the verge of manhood, but his acquirements bore no comparison with those of his cousin William, although he was not negligent when opportunity offered for mental improvement.

Julia had outgone the rounds of sixteen winters, and was just beginning to assume an interesting figure and deportment; her mind had been cultivated at the seminary she had left but a week previous, and this was the first visit she had made to the family of Marvin since the death of her mother, which took place when she was but seven years of age.

Julia's heart was tender, and the recollection of her earlier moments, when a mother's warm caresses approbated her infantile gambols, often started the tear-drop from its lurking-place, to heighten the loveliness that revelled upon her ruddy cheeks.

Mr. Munford, the father of Edward and Julia, had, about three years previous to this time, fallen a victim to disease occasioned by exposure to the rigours of a Canadian winter, while on a trading tour among the natives of that dreary region; but he survived his return long enough to arrange his pecuniary matters in such way as to leave his children above the reach of want, by proper economy, without the aid of industry.

Mr. Marvin was what the better informed part of community would call a good man: he was just in all his dealings—liberal almost to a fault, and the management of his affairs, both foreign and domestic, was conducted in a way that called forth the admiration of the surrounding multitude; but he was on the decline of life: and his lady, partaking, in a great measure, of that urbanity of manner which characterised her estimable partner, had, also, seen the best of her days. The veil of imbecility was fast enveloping her mental and physical powers, and she could only feel relief from the melancholy forebodings of her heart, by looking through the types and shadows of revelation, to the hopes of the gospel, and the atoning sacrifice made upon Calvary's summit.

When all had partaken of the necessary sustenance, a general invitation was given, by the head of the family, to take a short tour, the extent of which should not exceed the limits of Longwood, and to return on the third day. William and Edward immediately accepted the invitation, but Mrs. Marvin and Julia declined. The former being slightly indisposed, expressed a wish to be excluded from a participation in the contemplated pleasures of the tour, asserting that the fatigue would be too severe for the present state of her health; and Julia, not wishing to leave her infirm relative, begged to be excused till a more favourable opportunity.

The preparatory measures taken, and all things necessary for their departure properly arranged, the coach was drawn up, and a crack of the whip announced its readiness to proceed. Having formally fulfilled his office, John, the coachman, mounted his throne with as much seeming pride as an oriental monarch could possibly manifest, and they pursued their journey.

The place of their destination was but thirty-six miles distant; and that part of the country through which their route lay was variegated with beautiful landscapes, whose spreading verdure struck the spectator with delight. Here and there, amid the blooming foliage, rose to the view of our sentimental travellers a neat edifice of comfortable appearance, denoting, not by its proudly elevated turrets, but by the simplicity of its construction, that some one, favoured by fortune, had chosen, in this rural retreat, a spot on which to spend the remnant of his days.

"Here," observed Edward, "might even the cynic contemplate the beauties of nature and art with rueful admiration, and having indulged his conflicting senses for a moment, relapse into his native delusions."

Steadily passed the bounding steeds over the heavy road, and three hours had glided pleasantly by, when they descried, but a short distance ahead, the spire of a village church towering above the surrounding woods. William consulted his time-piece, and found, by the indication of its hand, that it told the hour of twelve, when our travellers concluded that a little refreshment would be of service, both to themselves and to their beasts, and accordingly determined to alight at the village-inn. Here they were not a little surprised at seeing a gentleman with whom they were intimately acquainted—a wealthy dealer in dry goods—who informed them that he had been making a contract at Longwood, and was on his return home—that a Mr. Burton, extensively concerned in the manufactories, had taken his orders, and it was only necessary that they should be understood to be faithfully executed.

"Burton!" exclaimed the father of William, "is it he who, fired with indignation at the insults offered his country, left his estate in the hands of a reprobate son, and sallied forth to brandish his sword in the field of glory?"



"The same," returned the other; "he fought heroically during four years; and, on his return, found his pecuniary circumstances so much embarrassed, that he was compelled to make immediate sale of all his possessions to satisfy the demands of the rapacious horde which had supplied his son's extravagances. When matters were amicably settled, he found, rather to his surprise, that a considerable remnant had fallen to him, with which he determined to commence business. A gentleman in the neighbourhood offered him an interest in an establishment for the manufacture of cotton and woollen goods, which he readily accepted, and is now rapidly bettering his circumstances, having buried beneath the surface of the earth the guilty wretch who had nearly reduced him to ruin."

"Mrs. Burton, then, must have closed her earthly career previous to her husband's exchange of a civil for a military life, or such destructive consequences as you relate could not have taken place."

"Yes, the good woman had passed the bound of time two years before Burton conceived a desire to share in the fortunes of a military campaign. Had she been living, he would not have left a quiet home for the toils and dangers of a soldier's life. But she left him a daughter, who now constitutes his chief happiness. He has, indeed, a son; but his society is rendered uninteresting, from a casualty to which, in all probability, he is doomed for life."

"In what," inquired William, "does this casualty consist?"

"In the effects of a connexion formed some time since, with a strolling sect of religionists, calling themselves 'New-Lights,' by whom he was turned from the path of duty and interest into that of superstition and bigotry; and the opinion generally prevails that his intellectual faculties are so much impaired, by giving way to his newly-imbibed notions, that without a speedy alteration for the better he will have to undergo the discipline assigned persons in a state of mental derangement."

"This is really a misfortune," returned William, "and must tend very materially to make the family unhappy."

"At first it did produce great uneasiness, but the sister is now more reconciled to his peculiarities, and Burton himself bears all with a truly philosophic spirit."

After much light conversation, on the state of the body politic, *et cetera*, in which William and Edward took a conspicuous part, it was deemed advisable for our travellers to separate, and pursue their respective courses.

#### THE CHURCH YARD.

LATE in the afternoon of a pleasant day in summer, I had taken a seat to which I had accustomed myself to retire whenever I felt disposed for a few moments of gloomy meditation. It overlooked a church-yard, and the home of all, the universal resting place, never failed to impress upon the mind ideas perhaps too

seldom there, for thought of futurity was with me a constant attendant on the place I had taken. The very room in which I was, appeared shrouded in solemnity, and when fancy lent its aid, I could pursue, through days gone by, the actions and designs of the mingled dust before me. By dint of making my imagination subservient to my will, I could almost reanimate and converse with the departed dead, and listen to their whisperings for my answer.

To observe the multitude of persons who visited this habitation of the grim tyrant, and view the actions of all kinds and classes who occasionally strolled in the yard, was sufficient employment for many a leisure moment. Sterne, in his inimitable Sentimental Journey, mentions standing behind a circle where not more than three words are spoken, and yet can bring off a multitude of dialogues that have passed, which he could write down for facts. In the same manner could I view those before me, and in my mind's eye see what was passing within them. The sedate man marched slowly onward, or paused for a moment when he passed the grave of a hero or a patriot; and a noble emulation possessed the souls of many when they viewed a country's thanks, a country's praise, inscribed upon the tablet of the tomb. Unthinking, heedless youth would pass carelessly over the bodies of their predecessors, discoursing on light, trifling subjects, and their "loud laugh, which spoke the vacant mind," would sometimes break the solemnity of the place and mingle, floating on the breeze, with the sigh which breathed the feelings of a heart afflicted. Children came and wept at the grave of a parent, and recalled the words of instruction they had received from the lips of him who now could not hear their thanks, nor again give admonition, and renewed their determination to adhere yet more closely to the dictates of the being they had once listened to with pleasure. The man who had been a husband, came with his pledges by the hand, and pointed to the hillock of her who is now a saint in Heaven, and as he recalled past moments of bliss to remembrance, and beseeched the departed to look down and witness his fidelity to those she had given him, his tears mingled with the pearls of his infants, and I felt a drop of sympathy wet a cheek unused to its moisture and dim an eye it was not wont to suffuse.

A red tinge yet remained where the god of day had disappeared, and but few lingered in the consecrated spot. An elderly man, with two blooming youths for his auditors, was comparing the departure of day to the close of life, and as he pointed to the place where rested the remains of a man whose name will be immortal, he seemed to tell them that the man of worth, like the sun, cheered and illumined the earth after his departure, and that the rays of his virtue were reflected and brought back by the memory of those he had assisted, and shed a twilight of glory after he had passed away.

The moon in her turn now shed her uncertain light upon the place, the cares and perplexities of the day seemed banished, the rattling of carriages was suspended, and a universal silence pervaded the scene. A figure was seen which appeared to steal and glide among the tombs as if fearful of disturbing unconscious dust by a careless step.

He passed the monument of departed glory without emotion, and the mausoleums of pompous nothings attracted no other attention than as they afforded him a hiding place by their shadows. He came not at that lone hour to pay the silent, unseen tribute of affection at the grave of his kindred, for his connexions who slept the long sleep reposed in a distant land. He came not to lament at the hillock of a friend, or feel remorse at viewing the resting place of an enemy, death had not laid his iron hand upon the mistress of his soul, and no damsel, broken hearted, from him demanded a tear or a sigh at her ruin. He brought no chaplet of flowers, entwined in the love hour of sorrowful embrace, to adorn some more sacred earth, nor was his spirit broken that he needed such fertile alleviation.

It must be, thought I, that some unhallowed purpose brings him here at this time under cover of the night, to perpetrate a deed, blacker and darker than the time he has chosen. Yes, said I, such caution shows it, and he must be more narrowly watched. I left my seat, and followed this singular being, cautiously, and I do not hesitate to confess, fearfully. He stooped behind a high monument, while a weeping willow o'erhung his head, and seemed to wave its drooping limbs mournfully over him. He whistled tremulously and shrill. I leaned forward in breathless anxiety; my hat fell from my head and I bumped my unprotected caput against the corner of a stone, with such violence that for the moment I was nearly stunned. The same shrill whistle was repeated, and the flesh almost crawled from my bones, when I saw a kind of unearthly figure, covered with black and white spots, crouching on its belly and slowly moving towards the mysterious stranger. I had little doubt that I was in the vicinity of one who held converse with beings of other worlds, and viewed the monster creeping towards him as no better than an imp from the infernal abode. The man seized and hugged him joyfully in his arms, and as he hurried from the place, passed without observing me ready to shrink with fear, when to my inexpressible surprise and mortification, I saw he bore triumphantly along, nothing more or less than a small speckled lap dog!

J.

#### GRATITUDE.

ALL the sentiments which spring from gratitude possess a religious character; they elevate the soul of him who feels them.

## THE NERVOUS STUDENT.

THE following narrative, by a person of veracity, may perhaps serve in some small degree to illustrate the mysterious communication which subsists between mind and matter.

"I had been ill for some time," said the narrator, "and was termed *nervous* by my friends. The sudden closing of a door, or the unexpected sight of a stranger, for an instant, affected me painfully. Notwithstanding the representations of my friends, I studied very hard, but upon a branch of knowledge about which none of my class-mates were employed. It so happened that I had allotted to myself but a small portion of time in which to commit my regular lesson to memory. It was completed, however, and I took my seat in the recitation-room as usual. When it came my turn to recite, I felt excessively faint, although my task was an easy one, and I knew it perfectly. Before completing it I was compelled to inform the teacher of my singular feelings. He directed two of my class-mates to lead me to the pump immediately, as I turned very pale. Before reaching the place, however, I had entirely fainted away: there was nothing remarkable in this, nor did it appear to others to be so; but I had my own sensations and reflections, which appeared so strong and vivid, so singular in their nature, that I felt ashamed to describe them, at the time, to my friends. At this period I am persuaded that I shall be acquitted of any feeling bordering on superstition, and I will endeavour, however imperfectly, to give a brief description of my sensations. The facts, then, are simply these.

"I thought myself to be gently reclining on air, with my face upwards. The sensation was not such as we feel when resting on down, but infinitely more pleasant, without the necessity of the least exertion.

"I was looking upward, as one gazes from the bottom of a well, to a bright spot above my head. The wall seemed to be composed of 'darkness that might be felt.' It appeared not to be capable of affording any resistance, nor to be *matter*, in the sense that we understand it—but still it was there, a wall of darkness. Up this shaft, if I may so term it, I seemed to be gradually ascending, without any exertion of my own whatever. The thought of death was not present, but my sensations were altogether more delightful than I can express. At the summit, looking down at me, were two or three of the most enchanting, lovely beings, of whose beauty the soul can form no conception. Nothing seemed earthly about them, nor do I remember that the thought of angels, or of beings different from human beings, were present. Behind them appeared the blue sky of that peculiar softness so pleasing to the eye. It had, however, a more bright and warm appearance than we ever see in the heavens. It is in vain to attempt to describe the beings who smiled and beckoned to me from above. I do not mean to say that they existed in reality—

but I say that the impression was as vivid as reality, and entirely different from our uncertain and flitting sensations in a dream. Their cheeks were bright red, and their breasts, necks, and foreheads, of ivory whiteness. Their smiles were peculiarly pleasurable, but there was not the remotest consciousness of any base mixture of earthly passion. It was a *new* sensation, entire of itself, which cannot therefore be described, and the remembrance of which I shall carry with me to the grave. There was nothing overwhelming or passionate, but a calm quiet of inexpressible delight and happiness. From gazing at them I was suddenly and disagreeably roused by the shock made by the cold water which my friends applied to my face. The first emotion was pain, and regret at losing what a moment before appeared to be reality. It required an effort of memory to convince me that what I had just witnessed was not reality. I had not fainted entirely away but a short time, not so long as when relating this, but the pleasure I experienced, as before stated, seemed of indefinite extent, and increasing.

"I am not surely so vain and self-righteous as to suppose that I was then entering upon the world of spirits, and literally going to heaven. I was deep sunk in sin—full of worldly ambition, of pride, of wickedness. I do not say this for the purpose of extorting a compliment, for I firmly believe that if any one will carefully examine and analyse the motives of his actions, he will find them always selfish, base, and degrading. It is only the Spirit of God which hallows whatsoever we may do."

MONTICOLA.

## THE MASON AND HIS SON.

THE following fact occurred at Clangenfurt, in Carinthia, when the French army occupied that town.—The thunder had much injured the very high steeple of the principal church, and a mason and his son were employed to repair it. A crowd of inhabitants assembled at the palace to witness this perilous operation. The father, a man of fifty years of age, still vigorous and active, ascended first: his son followed him; they almost reached the summit—the spectators tremblingly counted their steps, when they saw the son suddenly lose hold of the ladder and fall to the ground. A cry of terror arose. All crowded towards the unfortunate man, who lay shattered upon the pavement without a sign of life. In the meantime the father continued to ascend, performed his task, descended with sang froid, and appeared with a melancholy, but composed air before the spectators, who immediately surrounded him. All endeavoured to console him; but they soon learned, with horror, that the fall of his son was not accidental, for that he himself had precipitated him from the top of the steeple.

"Heavens!" exclaimed they, "is it possible!—what fury—what madness!"

"Listen to me," replied the father, without emotion: "In our trade there are

certain rules and customs. The oldest and most experienced venture into danger the first—the younger follow. Accordingly as one ladder is secured by cords, another is raised which is at first fastened at the bottom to the top part of the other. The eldest ascends this ladder, which is only steadied at the bottom; and, assisted by his companion, who supplies him with cord, he proceeds to fasten it at the top. This is the work of the greatest danger. As I was occupied at the highest extremity of the ladder, I suddenly heard my son exclaim below me, 'Father, father, there's a cloud before my eyes; I know not where I am.' I instantly raised my right foot, and gave him a kick, which struck him in the forehead, and he fell without uttering a word."

"Infamous wretch! monster! what demon could have urged you to such a crime?"

"Softly, gentlemen; I am assuredly to be pitied; but I am far from believing myself guilty. In our trade it is well known, that if the head turns giddy in a dangerous position, where there are no means of assisting one's self, and of taking time to recover, that man is irretrievably lost. Now such was the case of my son. From the moment that his sight was gone there was no hope for him; in two or three seconds more he must necessarily have fallen; but before that, and in his last agonies, he would undoubtedly have grasped at the tottering ladder I was placed on; he would have dragged it away, and we should have both fallen. In an instant I foresaw this inevitable result, and I prevented it by dealing the blow which precipitated him, and which—saved me, as you see. Now tell me, you who call me a monster, if I had killed myself at the same time with him, who would have supported his unfortunate wife and children, who henceforward have nothing to look to but my labours? To die for him would perhaps have been the duty of a father; but to die along with him, without any utility, is, I believe, what neither religion nor justice require."

During some moments a profound silence reigned through the assembled crowd; but the clamours recommenced—the mason was arrested, and delivered over to the tribunals. He there displayed the same firmness he had shown before the people. The Judges, like the multitude, could not resist a first impulse of horror; but, upon reflecting on the situation in which he was placed, and the motive he had assigned for his conduct, they acknowledged that his reasoning, however horrific, was just, and exhibited a presence of mind to which, though with shuddering, they could not refuse their admiration.

News of Literature and Fashion.

DANDY.—A fool who is vain of being the lady figure of some fashionable tailor, and thinks the wealth of his wardrobe will conceal the poverty of his ideas; though, like his long-eared brother in the lion's skin, he is easily betrayed.



## THE AMERICAN ATHENÆUM.

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 1825.

## TO OUR PATRONS.

HAVING been solicited, by many of our patrons, to issue the *Athenæum weekly*, instead of once a fortnight, we feel bound to comply with their wishes. Although the *extra expense* of covers, carriers, mailing, &c. cannot fail of being felt in the infancy of such an establishment, still it shall be our aim to please. In future, therefore, a number of the *Athenæum*, containing *eight pages*, will be published every week, and delivered to subscribers in the usual manner.

## LIBERAL CRITICISM.

SEVERAL late numbers of Blackwood's Magazine contain strictures on "American writers," in which a very high notice is taken of our fellow-citizen, WOODWORTH, whose literary character the writer handles "without gloves." He condescends to admit, however, that "some of his little songs are tolerable!" But the cream of the joke is, that several of Woodworth's "little songs" have received the most flattering encomiums from the editor of the same Magazine, and many other journalists in the "three kingdoms," who published them as the productions of Wordsworth! The "Old Oak-en Bucket," and the "Water-Melon," in particular, were pronounced to be the finest specimens of English pastoral poetry.

The grand secret, however, which has lately leaked out, remains to be told. These strictures on "*American Writers*" are written on this side of the Atlantic, by a poetaster who has been disappointed in his pursuit of fame, and who has, more than once, smarted under the lash of Woodworth's criticism. His name hereafter.

—We intend hereafter devoting the cover of the *Athenæum* to our advertising friends.—Terms made known at our office.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The lines of "Pastora," "Cadet," and others, will appear in a future number.

The stanzas of a "well-wisher" are defective, and though we are *privileged* to amend them, yet we would rather be excused.

## THE DRAMA.

"'Tis with our judgment as our watches, none  
Go just alike, but each believes his own."

## NEW-YORK THEATRE.\*

April 30th.—MERCHANT OF VENICE.—Our expectations were not raised very high upon this occasion, and they were

\*The alteration made in the economy of our paper, will not allow us, *this week*, to devote so much room to our theatrical critiques as we had intended—we shall so arrange our matter hereafter, however, that our censorship shall assume a more regular form.

not disappointed. In the character of Shylock we have seen many actors—some of the most eminent, and there is little probability that we shall ever again witness the representation of the Merchant of Venice with half the satisfaction we experienced when we first saw it—Mr. Cooke was the Shylock; that great actor appeared to possess physical requisites for the part, and with his mighty powers, it was equalled only by his own Richard. Such are the powers necessary to develop this master-piece of Shakspeare's creation, that it may almost be said to be an honour even to fail in the representation—at least such is our estimation; we therefore willingly allow, that to come up to our standard in this arduous character, would be next to a work of supererogation. We think Mr. Lee (Shylock) failed most when he essayed to do the most;—he attempted too much—to make many of those significant points and distinctions which characterise Mr. Kean's acting, and to do which, with effect, requires all that actor's eccentric (we will not call them natural) powers; there was a want of *nature* in expressing that tide of passion, of joy, malignity, and agony, with which the character of Shylock abounds. Mr. Lee's readings, also, were incorrect. In his first scene with Bassanio, they enter negotiating the loan of money; Bassanio had offered Shylock his friend Antonio as surety; as a substantial merchant, he had no doubt of his acceptance, and had given his name as a primary inducement for Shylock to agree to his terms; but Mr. Lee thus gave the passage—

Shy. Three thousand ducats—well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months—well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound!—well;

as if this was the first intimation he had of the security. In the scene where he lends the money to Antonio, when remonstrating upon the treatment he had endured from the merchant, to his other grievances he adds that Antonio had frequently rated him for taking usury—had spit upon him, even in the Rialto—the public place for business:

Senor Antonio, many a time, and oft  
In the Rialto, you have, &c.

Mr. Lee pointed it

Senor Antonio, many a time and oft,  
In the Rialto, &c.

which reading, beside losing the climax—the insult offered in the most public place—is tautological, or as if *often* was more than *many*.

Mrs. Barnes performed the part of Portia in her best manner, and if she left something to be desired, she yet gave proofs of genuine capacity; her delivery of the beautiful apostrophe on mercy was very impressive.

Gobbo, by Mr. Watkinson, and Launcelot, by Mr. Barnes, were pieces of rich comic acting, and Mr. Clarke and Mr. Foot appeared to become their characters

well; indeed, we never saw Bassanio better supported than it was by the former of these gentlemen; and Antonio, in Mr. Foot, has seldom had an equally efficient representative.

## For the American Athenæum.

## THE MAID OF MEXICO,

## A DRAMATIC SKETCH;

Founded on a tradition of that country.

## PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Ulmen, an aged Chief of Mexico.

Leander, an European.

1st and 2d Soldiers.

Members of the Council.

Guards.

Priestess of the Temple of Fire.

Leira, her attendant.

Other female attendants.

SCENE I.—[An aged Ulmen seated in the Porch of the Temple of Fire, his right hand holding the mace of power, as represented in the Mexican paintings. Near him stands Leira, one of the female attendants in the Temple. In the back ground are two guards armed with bows and arrows.]

Ulmen. The hour brings back no message from the host

That left our silent streets at break of morn.

What do the burning sacrifices say,

Prophetic of our future destiny?

Leira. They say that death is frequent;—but th' event

Is yet inscrutable to mortal eyes.

Thrice has the Priestess purified the place,

But yet an awful silence do they keep:

Trembling, she stands, and fears disastrous lot.

Ulmen. Would that my limbs could bear my weight as when

I slew the spotted panther in his den—

Or hurled Tlascalla's champion to the earth.

But, ah! those days of youthful strength are past,

And I must gaze with women from house-tops.

This feeble arm will scarcely now suffice

To wield the staff that aids my tottering steps.

Time was—'twould send an arrow to the mark

Unerring—past the strength of modern days.—

Lo! who comes hither, in disorder'd haste?

His blood and dust bespeak him from the fight.

[Enter a Soldier, trailing his spear reversed, crossing to the Temple.]

Thy wearied steps, and fainting looks, portend

Thee, Soldier, as a messenger in haste.

The Priestess is engaged in solemn rites,

And none may pass the Temple's porch, uncalled.

What tidings do you bear? How goes the battle?

Sol. The angry god this day hath frown'd on us.

The foe with rapid steps pursue our host:

They, from yon hill, look down upon the plain—

And like the frighten'd deer we fly before.

Our king is slain—his scatter'd warriors fled—

The god of living fire alone can save:

And to these portals have I bent my way,

To call the Priestess, and beseech her aid.

Ulmen. Have then the Northern tribes so far advanced?

Has ruin fallen thus on Mexico?

Have all our warriors fled?

Sol. —A wretch made stand

Where the steep pass made few a front to hosts;

'Twas there a fatal arrow slew our king.

And quiver'd in the bosom of his son.

One poison'd arrow smote the hearts of both!

In vain the bravest warriors o'er them bled—

Lock'd in each other's arms they roll in dust,

Or deck the triumph of our enemies!

Perhaps the Priestess of our living god

May bar the Northern tribes' victorious course.

If all our nation solemnly should kneel,

And worship at the altars of the Sun,

Perhaps our angry god might deign to hear—

Send some mad whirlwind to o'erwhelm the foe.

Or drown them in the waters of the lake.

We trust alone to god—all else is vain.

Ulmen. And must we then pollute our streets in blood,